Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Ala.

Booker T. Washington, A.M., LL.D.

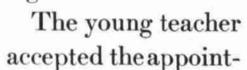
Founder and Principal

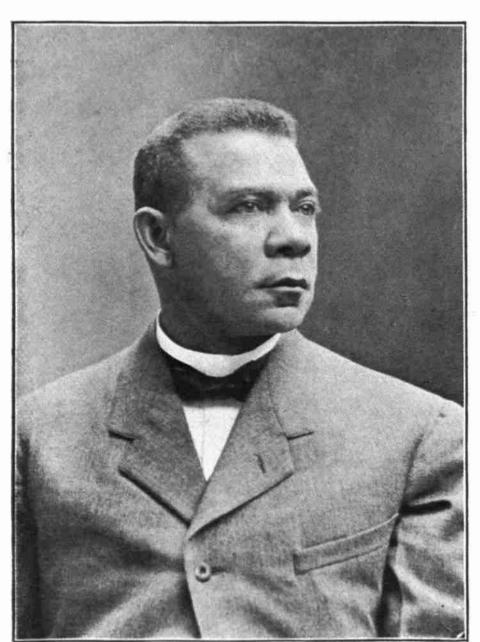
TUSKEGEE NORMAL SCHOOL was opened July 4, 1881, with one teacher and thirty pupils in a dilapidated shanty church rented from colored people.

The teacher was a graduate of Hampton Institute, a former slave whose value as property was \$400. He had some ex-

perience as a teacher in West Virginia and at Hampton. When the state of

When the state of Alabama appropriated \$2,000 in 1880 for the establishment of a Negro school at Tuskegee, forty miles east of Montgomery, Gen. S. C. Armstrong, president of Hampton, was asked to suggest a teacher. He recommended Booker T. Washington, then in charge of Hampton's night school.





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ment, and in June, 1880, began a work that has made Tuskegee famous as a model industrial school, and has given its founder and leader a position as the acknowledged world-leader of the Negro race.

Before the school opened, the new teacher spent a month in Macon County, Alabama, of which Tuskegee is the county seat, making a survey of the situation.

Studying the People

With a mule and cart, he went through Macon County studying the actual life of the people,—on the plantation, in the home, the church, and the school. He found, during the tour,

"the one-room cabin stuffed with parents, children, and non-descript relatives; the fat pork and corn regimen; the high-priced organ to satisfy musical aspirations, when there was only one rusty fork to convey food to nine or ten mouths; the Saturday night exodus from the plantation to town; the cruelty of the crop lien, and the stupidity of the one crop-system; farming by spasms and not by calculation; the three months ungraded school; the astonishing fervor in religion, matched by an equally astonishing laxity in morals."

"What I discovered," he said, "discouraging as it appeared at the time, was just what might have been expected. Some of the people I met were living in practically the same places where they, or their fathers and mothers, had previously been slaves. The larger opportunities which freedom had brought to them, important as it was for them potentially, had made very little practical difference in their lives, or their methods of work, or their customs, — they had remained just about as they had been before Emancipation. In some cases where they had showed their endeavor to get something better, the results were often ludicrous. The truth that forced itself upon me was that these people needed, not only book learning, but a knowledge of how to live, how to cultivate the soil, to buy land and to build houses, and to make the most of their opportunities."

Pupils Thirty to Forty Years of Age

No one under fifteen years of age was admitted to Tuskegee at its opening, and none without previous schooling. Some of the pupils were thirty or forty years of age, and most of them had been or were school teachers. At the end of the first month nearly fifty persons were enrolled, and two weeks later an additional teacher, Miss Olivia A. Davidson, a graduate of Hampton, and of the Framingham, Mass., Normal School, reached Tuskegee to reinforce Mr. Washington's determination to "have the students study things as well as books, acquire wholesome personal habits as well as desirable intellectual habits, and learn the parts and care of their bodies as well as the parts of their speech and their use."

An abandoned farm of one hundred acres, one mile from Tuskegee, was purchased for \$500, with the help of General Marshall, treasurer of Hampton, and other friends, and a permanent site for the school was thus secured. The farmer's stable and the henhouse were metamorphosed into recitation rooms. The legislature of Alabama increased its appropriation